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ECONOMIC MYTHS AND IMPERIALISM

HARRY MAGDOFF

POLITICAL REPRESSION

ALAN WOLFE

Crisis in the Classroom

Reviewed by HERB GINTIS

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NOTES FROM THE EDITORS

The Italian edition of MR—which has a circulation averaging somewhat more than half that of the English edition—is inaugurating a new feature which we hope will make an important contribution to its usefulness to Italian readers. It is a monthly economic supplement, compiled by a group of comrades who specialize in the study of Italian society and the Italian economy. The following quotation from the introductory statement explains the nature and purpose of the supplement. "The economic supplement . . . is intended to provide some of the most necessary economic information for the elaboration of a political theory and praxis of the Italian Left. . . . The economic supplement also intends to go beyond the stage of ideological disquisitions, so fashionable in the Italian Left, by trying to give priority to the analysis of economic reality. The work will develop as follows: (1) providing news and data on the most relevant topics in a language accessible to laymen; (2) providing information on the official statistical sources . . . , describing the gathering techniques

(*Continued on inside back cover*)

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ECONOMIC MYTHS AND IMPERIALISM

By Harry Magdoff

The following was written as a Foreword to the American edition of Pierre Jalée, *Imperialism in the Seventies* (New York: Third Press, available January 1972).

With this volume Pierre Jalée has capped his two previous books and has made, in my opinion, a major contribution to our knowledge of modern imperialism. This should come as no surprise to the readers of his earlier work in this field: *The Pillage of the Third World* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1968) and *The Third World in World Economy* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1969).

Most writers on imperialism can be classified as belonging to one of three types: apologists for the policies and practices of the metropolitan centers; agitators who detail the depredations of the metropolitan centers, often accompanying the bill of particulars with the cries of pain and outrage of the oppressed; and those who dig deeply to find the roots, and the modes of operation, of imperialism. Jalée clearly belongs to the last group. This does not mean that he is not as emotionally involved as the writers of the second group in his hatred of imperialism. But the task he sets himself is that of coldly examining reality. His underlying assumption is that such knowledge is necessary if the imperialist system is to be effectively destroyed and if the dependent countries enmeshed in the imperialist network are ever to attain true independence. Because of this perspective, Jalée digs into the cold facts without the usual inhibitions of the university professor.

As a rule, polite academic scholars prefer not to use the term "imperialism." They find it distasteful and unscientific.

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Thus, Professor Thornton of Toronto University writes, "Imperialism . . . is no word for scholars. It has been analyzed too often, given too many shades of meaning. In our time it has become a football, a war cry, a labelled card in a sociological laboratory."[1]* Similarly, "exploitation" is not a nice word. One of today's leading academic specialists on colonialism, David K. Fieldhouse, Beit Lecturer in the History of the Commonwealth at Oxford University, in a paper on economic exploitation of Africa explains, "Exploitation, like imperialism, is no word for scholars because it had long been confused by ideological concepts."[2]

Scholars generally have had no trouble with emotionally laden words—such, for example, as murder, rape, or syphilis—even when the existing mores frowned on such usage in polite society.[3] It is only a certain class of words, significantly enough, that over the years has raised the hackles of scholars. Thus, not only "imperialism" and "imperialist exploitation," but even such an important term in the socioeconomic lexicon as "capitalism" is treated by academics with great circumspection.

To be sure, academics are becoming somewhat desensitized to the use of the term "capitalism." Among other things, the growth of socialist societies enforces some sort of taxonomy of social systems, although many, if not most, academics still prefer some such euphemism as "free" or "private" enterprise. However, even those bourgeois economists who bravely adopt the term "capitalism" still balk at the combination of "capitalist" and "exploitation," since their system of thought excludes the very possibility of capitalist exploitation, other than as a rare and temporary aberration.

Desensitization to the use of the word "imperialism" is also coming along, but at an exceptionally slow pace. On the whole, scholars as well as publicists find it easier to attach the label of imperialism to another country, not to one's own, or to a past period of history, not to the present. Thus, one may find in the United States considerable agreement that French occupation of Indochina, and the French war against the revolutionary war of independence of the Indochinese people, should

* Notes will be found at the end of the article.

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be identified as imperialism. Similarly, the Spanish-American war can today be labelled, even in polite U.S. society, as imperialism, although the nature of that war as one waged against the peoples of the Philippines, Cuba, and Puerto Rico is not as generally acknowledged. Nevertheless, the underlying continuity of U.S. imperialism—including the similarities between the U.S. attempt to reap the fruit of the final dissolution of Spain's empire in the Western Hemisphere and in the Pacific and the current attempt to fill the imperialist vacuum created by the dissolution of France's empire in Asia—is as yet barely recognized. But it is also true that the ferocity and tenacity of the U.S. war against the peoples of South Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia are opening more and more eyes: an experience which is stimulating the more advanced and critical minds in the United States to learn more about the history and practices of imperialism, including that of the United States in the present epoch.

The major obstacle to such enlightenment is the pervasiveness of the ideological rationalization for imperialism. The extent of this pervasiveness is not easy to perceive because such rationalization is deep-seated. Its roots are intertwined with the accepted, conventional modes of thought and the consciousness of a people. Thus, they are located in the false patriotism and the racism that sink deeply and imperceptibly into the individual's subconscious; in the traditions, values, and even aesthetics of the cultural environment—an environment evolved over centuries, during which self-designated "superior" cultures assumed the right to penetrate and dominate "inferior" cultures. These roots are also buried in the sophisticated theorems of both liberal and conservative economics, sociology, political science, anthropology, and history. For these reasons, citizens of an imperialist country who wish to understand imperialism must first emancipate themselves from the seemingly endless web of threads that bind them emotionally and intellectually to the imperialist condition.

It is, of course, easier to identify the preconceptions of past generations than to recognize one's own blinders. For this reason it is instructive to look back at the way imperialist thinking has permeated the consciousness of even many socialists

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and advanced reformers. Such a retrospective view should alert us to the need for critical exploration of our own accepted doctrine. We cite here only one example from English history, though there are plenty of cases of "social imperialism" in other periods of English history and in other imperialist centers to choose from.

At the time of the Boer War an intense debate took place in Britain's Fabian Society over whether the Society should criticize Great Britain's militarism and imperialism.[4] The pro-imperialists won; and to consolidate the victory, George Bernard Shaw wrote a pamphlet called *Fabianism and the Empire.* In it that committed socialist and independent thinker, who so often dissected the hypocrisy of the existing culture with a sharp scalpel, explained:

> Great Power, consciously or unconsciously, must govern in the interests of civilization as a whole; and it is not in those interests that such mighty forces as gold-fields, and the formidable armaments that can be built upon them, should be wielded irresponsibly by small communities of frontiersmen. Theoretically, they should be internationalized, not British-imperialized, but until the Federation of the World becomes an accomplished fact we must accept the most responsible Imperial Federation available as a substitute for it.[5]

By "the most responsible Imperial Federation" Shaw obviously meant Great Britain. What else would a typical Englishman think, be he socialist, Tory, or Whig? But what is especially significant here is that Shaw's argument is but a variation of the dominant imperialist theme of his times and of his country: Great Britain's responsibility for empire arose from its obvious superiority in political administration; its manifest destiny was to civilize the heathens by teaching them the art of government.

With the progress of formal decolonization, the manifest destiny of the imperialist centers has changed. The new manifest destiny—the manifest destiny of our times—is the responsibility to teach the heathens the art of economics, so that these poor people can also become healthy, wealthy, and wise. Accordingly, the rationalization of contemporary imperialism leans heavily on bourgeois economic theory. This is not meant to

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imply that the imperialist centers are aloof from the politics of the former colonial areas and current spheres of influence. Waging wars, fomenting counter-revolution, bribing officials—these and other means of direct and indirect intervention are very much part of the game. But the longer-run imperialist strategy for the Third World falls into two main categories: First, stabilization of those political arrangements which most reliably, under the given conditions, guarantee continuation of the capitalist property system. And second, control and influence over economic development with a view to assuring dependency upon, and integration with, the trade and investment network of the imperialist sector of the world.

The accepted ideas of the advanced capitalist societies provide a rich breeding ground for the ideology of this new phase of imperialism—imperialism without colonies. The equation of freedom of the individual with freedom of enterprise is a useful formula to justify the political programs of the imperialist centers. Over and above this is the implicit assumption that freedom of trade along with freedom of enterprise will inevitably foster the most advantageous path of economic development.

According to the conventional wisdom, all that is needed to get the underdeveloped countries moving is a healthy push; freedom of trade and investment will take care of the rest. Not unlike an inert mass in Newton's laws of motion, the underdeveloped countries will roll endlessly along, gaining momentum from an occasional further push, if only an initiating source of new energy is applied. Such an initial push, liberals and conservatives agree, can only come from an adequate injection of technically advanced capital via private investment, and, if that is not enough, by public foreign aid.

Comforted by this universal dogma of the Western world, liberals and progressives with their humanitarian instincts can find themselves in substantial agreement with the programs devised in the imperialist centers for control and influence of the periphery. Liberals worry about the insufficiency of foreign aid, and they criticize the crass use of such aid to obtain special political privilege or to prop up reactionary governments. They therefore press for more and "purer" foreign aid, and they

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pray for honest and intelligent governments in the underprivileged nations which will use the aid to best advantage. Not unlike G. B. Shaw at the time of the Boer War, they are practical realists. Sensible enough to believe that reform must occur in the real world in which great and rich powers dominate the scene, they are thereby caught in today's imperialist ideological trap.

The more theoretically inclined of the liberals go so far as to speculate about the consistency of their policies with the true, long-term interests of the dominating monopoly corporations. They see a global harmony of interests in the rapid economic development of the underdeveloped countries. Since such economic development will presumably mean higher standards of living for the starving masses, it will also mean larger markets and higher profits for the international business community. All that remains, therefore, is for these corporations and foreign offices of the imperialist states to see the light.

Such liberals unfortunately do not understand that capitalists live in the actual present and not in the uncertain future. Of course capitalists want ever larger markets yielding ever larger profits. But these must be sought in the here and now, not in some hypothetical promised land. As a rule, corporations judge the feasibility of a foreign investment on its ability to return the initial outlay from the profits of the first three to five years. The capitalist imperative to concentrate on the present reality at home and abroad does not stem from psychological weakness or physical shortsightedness, but from the practical necessity of operating in a world of giant rivals and under the restraint of inherent financial limitations. If history delivers to them larger markets, they will eagerly exploit their new-found opportunities. But their decisions and actions have to be decided in terms of the concrete alternatives confronting them, always keeping in mind the imperative need to protect their assets and to raise their profits to the greatest possible extent. Imperialist governments, it is true, can afford to base their practices on a somewhat longer perspective; but they too have to touch base from time to time with the practical necessities of their business community, in view of the ineluctable fact that under capitalism the economic health of the social body

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rests on the economic health of the large corporations.[6]

The distorted bourgeois vision of economic development possibilities in the underdeveloped nations is traceable in large part to a special kind of myopia: the inability to focus on the fact (a) that the lop-sided array of a few rich alongside many poor capitalist countries is the result of, and still influenced by, the history of colonialism and semi-colonialism; and (b) that the normal economics of free and equal trade continuously reproduces and perpetuates the international maldistribution of wealth. In short, the conscious and unconscious defenders of the imperialist world system have not yet grasped, or are simply unwilling or unable to grasp, the heart of the question, as summarized in Marx's observation, "If the free-traders cannot understand how one nation can grow rich at the expense of another, we need not wonder, since these same gentlemen also refuse to understand how in the same country one class can enrich itself at the expense of another."[7]

A major source of mystification about the causes of unequal income and wealth is faith in the efficacy of the marketplace. Left alone, markets will presumably iron out all artificial or unjustified inequities. They are the objective and impersonal regulators which achieve the most efficient allocation of resources: in the long run they make sure that every one gets what's coming to him. It follows, conversely, that everyone's "getting what's coming to him"—and the inequality of incomes implied in this formula of distribution—is the product of hard facts, of objective and necessary economic laws. (When efficiency and economic necessity enter the door, morality and social justice fly out the window.)

The reality is different. In practice the market is merely an instrument of existing institutions. And these institutions are as much, if not more, the products of politics and the way power is exercised as of economics. This becomes especially apparent when we examine the "law of markets" as it pertains to foreign trade.

The accepted doctrine here is the one worked out by David Ricardo, a doctrine drummed into every student who takes an economics course in the United States. We are referring, of course, to what is known in economic litera-

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ture as the theory of comparative advantage. According to this theory, when the impersonal marketplace is the master, each country will concentrate on making those goods for which it is best suited and will buy from other countries products for which they are best suited. In this way, each country gets the maximum benefit from foreign trade.

To make his point, Ricardo used the following example: (a) Portugal and England as trading partners, and (b) wine and cloth as the items of trade. Since England produces cloth more efficiently than it could make wine, it pays for England to concentrate on the production of cloth and to exchange its cloth surplus for foreign wine. Portugal, on the other hand, is a relatively more efficient producer of wine than cloth. Hence Portugal specializes in wine and exchanges its wine surplus for cloth.

According to Ricardo's theory, Portugal ought to specialize in wine even if she were able to make cloth more efficiently than England. What is decisive is that each country should use its resources in such a way as to get the greatest possible amount of both wine and cloth. Thus, if Portugal could get more wine *and* more cloth by putting all its capital into wine and then importing cloth, the best course for Portugal's prosperity would be to concentrate on wine even if, hypothetically, Portugal could produce cloth more efficiently than England. It follows that each country is better off under the banner of free trade, for with free trade each country will make maximum use of its comparative advantages—comparative advantages arising from the quality of the soil, the skills of labor, the experience of capitalists, etc.

This comparative advantage doctrine has, as noted above, become almost universal dogma in Western culture, to the point of becoming accepted as the common sense of our times. Not only is the doctrine itself treated as absolute truth in economics textbooks, but Ricardo's very illustration is repeated over and over again.[8] The frequent recurrence of this illustration is easy to understand, since it is plausible, and the facts seem to be consistent with the theoretical model. Indeed, at the time Ricardo wrote, and perhaps up to this day, he was absolutely right: England did have a comparative advantage in

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making cloth and Portugal in making wine. But the rub is that he was equally wrong in thinking that this was the inevitable result of "pure" economics or that it proved the inevitable superiority of free trade.

Here what is needed is not a knowledge of abstract economic laws but of history. And what a study of history reveals is that the comparative advantages of England and Portugal had their origin not so much in *economics* as in *politics*. The comparative advantage that mattered was not rooted in soil or labor productivity, but in the superiority of British seapower and in Portugal's inability to hold on to its overseas empire without the protection of the British navy.

These remarks on Portugal and England, and what follows on this subject, are based on, and abstracted from, a recent, most illuminating, and useful book by Sandro Sideri, *Trade and Power*.[9] The close ties between England and Portugal go back to the fourteenth century. In the early stages of the "friendly" relationship between the two countries, Portugal was the dominant power, due to her strong navy and the use of that navy to obtain vast and rich colonial possessions. But Portugal had a small population and was unable to stand alone against the inroads of neighboring Spain. Conquered by Spain in 1580, Portugal required sixty years to regain its independence.

The many years of foreign control and the struggle for independence greatly weakened Portugal. To maintain her independence and to keep control over her far-flung colonial empire, she needed English help—support that became increasingly meaningful as a result of the rising strength of the English fleet. England, in turn, could make good use of Portuguese harbors in her own striving for empire and for command of the sea-lanes of the South Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea. But a simple *quid pro quo* was not enough for England, given the great disparity of power between the two countries. In a series of four commercial treaties, beginning with the Treaty of 1642 and ending with the Methuen Treaty of 1703, England imposed the conditions which established and enforced the "ideal" international division of labor celebrated to this day as a prime example of the virtues of objective and independent economic laws. The terms of the several treaties increasingly

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fostered Portugal's economic dependence on England—a price Portugal had to pay for maintaining a colonial empire without adequate military resources.

The earlier treaties (a) opened the door to English ships in Portugal and in Portugal's African and Indian territories, (b) gave special privileges to English traders in Portugal, and (c) required that Portugal buy all her ships from England. Each subsequent treaty broadened England's advantages, including the right to trade with all the Portuguese colonies (except for some trade monopolies Portugal retained in Brazil), the setting of limits to duties on imported British goods, and the exclusive right to rent ships to Portugal. The privileges thus obtained by England gave it access to the profitable African slave trade and the trade with Portugal's American colonies, boosted the British shipbuilding industry, and opened up markets for British manufactures.

All this, however, was merely the setting for the definitive international division of labor imposed by the Methuen Treaty of 1703.[10] In barest outline, the background to this treaty can thus be summarized: (1) A series of economic problems in Portugal had led to the development of a protectionist policy. Since commercial treaties inhibited the raising of tariff barriers, Portugal practiced protection by forbidding her people to wear foreign cloth. In addition, she took various steps to stimulate successfully the domestic manufacture of cloth. A lucrative market for British manufacturers and merchants was thus cut off. (2) While the British people preferred the lighter French clarets to the heavier Portuguese wines, wars with France and France's own protectionist policies induced Britain to look for alternative sources of wine. (3) Gold had been discovered in Brazil, and over the years productive gold mines had been developed there.

Against this background, the provisions of the commercial Methuen Treaty were few, but they hit directly at the crux of Britain's problem: Portuguese restrictions on English woolen cloth and wool manufactures were lifted; in return, Britain guaranteed a lesser duty on Portuguese wine relative to French wine. The results were likewise clear and simple: Portuguese cloth manufacture was smothered in its infancy; instead of developing

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a dynamic manufacturing industry, Portuguese capital flowed into viticulture and wine-making—to such an extent that investment in these fields replaced not only manufactures but even such investment as was needed to expand production of corn and other foodstuffs. As for England, the Methuen Treaty contributed substantially to expansion of English cloth production and the resulting larger-scale production helped reduce manufacturing costs and thus strengthened English ability to penetrate other foreign markets.

On top of all this, the gold obtainable in Portugal's Brazilian colony came to play a strategic role in these new trade arrangements, as well as in Britain's subsequent great economic development. Consequent to the treaty, Portugal's economy —with its concentration on wine, and in the absence of a manufacturing industry which would have given greater economic flexibility—became increasingly dependent on the British economy. While trade between the two countries flourished, Portugal's imports of goods from England far exceeded exports to England.[11] A large portion of the ocean trade between the two nations was carried in English bottoms, thereby intensifying Portugal's unfavorable balance of payments. The solution: the gold mined in Brazil was used to settle the bulk of Portugal's accounts with England. Portugal thus became a transmission belt, actually more like a sieve. Brazil's gold was shipped to Portugal and was then in large measure transshipped to England. Thus, Christopher Hill observes, "Especially after the Methuen Treaty of 1703, Portuguese trade, and particularly the gold of Brazil, contributed to the establishment of London as the bullion market of the world."[12] It would take us too far afield to explore the significance of London's becoming the world's bullion market. Suffice it to say, for the present, that this development was a valuable stimulus to England's evolution as world banker and foremost capitalist nation.

Those who are not economists, and perhaps some who are, may well wonder why so much space has been devoted here to the commercial treaties between Portugal and England. Our hope is that this will provide a beneficial illustration of the need to shake loose from the preconceptions of accepted "knowledge." For what is generally believed to have been natural and

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efficient when treated abstractly as a "pure" problem of international trade turns out to be historically created—created in the context of colonialism, war, nationalist rivalries, and military power. Moreover, this is but a mild example of the origins of the international division of labor: it occurred, after all, between two Christian, colonizing powers. This illustration barely touches upon the kind of international division of labor imposed by the practices of outright colonialism, including the changes in those countries where production ability previously had been superior to that of the colonizers. As the noted economic historian Carlo Cippola wryly comments, it was fortunate for England that India had had no Ricardo of her own:

> The story of the East India silks and calicoes that were imported into England and caused difficulty for the English textile industry is so well known that it does not need to be told here. It was fortunate for England that no Indian Ricardo arose to convince the English people that, according to the law of comparative costs, it would be advantageous for them to turn into shepherds and to import from India all the textiles that were needed. Instead, England passed a series of acts designed to prevent importation of Indian textiles and some "good results" were achieved.[13]

One of the chief hindrances to a full understanding of imperialism, and especially of imperialism without colonies, is the lack of appreciation of the extent to which international economic relations are the result of the social transformations imposed by colonialism and the whole complex history of imperialism. Such social transformations concern not only production and trade, but also the class structure, the politics, and (last but not least) the social psychology of peoples with a long history of subjugation under direct and indirect foreign rule.

The economic aspect of such social transformations is especially obscure because of what one might call, to use Marx's term, the fetishism of commodities. The dictionary defines a fetish as "a material, commonly an inanimate object regarded with awe as being the embodiment or habitation of a potent spirit, or as having magical potency because of the materials and methods used in compounding it." Conditioned as we are by living in a society operating with commodities and money prices, we endow the market with magical potency and regard the price system with equal awe. And in the process we forget,

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or never realize, that markets and prices are not the ultimate controllers of our lives. To the extent that they do control our lives, it is only because we accept, and live under, our existing class structure and political system. The underlying reality is to be found in the social relations of our time, in the relations among people. It is this reality which is masked by the worship of the impersonal magical powers of the price system.

If one has the presumption to talk about, or even hint at, unequal exchange between industrially advanced and industrially backward nations, the professor of economics cries out in rage, or explains patiently: "That is a contradiction in terms. There can be no inequality of exchange, since the market adjusts all inequities. All prices must, under the force of economic laws, represent exchange between equivalents." Up to a certain point, the professor is absolutely right. For once the price system is in existence, the system cannot continue unless each price at the very least covers the cost of what is needed to produce the commodity. If the price of a given commodity does not cover these costs, the commodity cannot for very long continue to be produced. It is in this sense that prices govern the use of productive resources.

But what are costs? In the final analysis all costs are reduced to labor, mental and physical, and the way labor is used. The other components of the production process—raw materials and machinery—are also the products of labor, and the way labor was used in the recent or distant past.

But where does this labor come from? How does it happen that there is a labor force available to work for wages and to shift from one job to another? What determines the cost of labor? These are far from easy questions, and we surely don't pretend to know all the answers. However, it is clear that any reliable set of answers must take into account two propositions: (1) The creation and maintenance of a labor force are far from "pure" economic phenomena. (2) There is no absolute "correct" or "equal" cost of labor, other than the rock-bottom biological minimum for keeping body and soul together. Labor as a cost in the production process varies from country to country, from region to region within a country, and from occupation to occupation.

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Entering into these differences are elements of force, politics, class struggle, and a long history of economic manipulation by those who hold the economic reins. Lurking behind, and incorporated into, today's wages and wage differentials is the history of slavery and semi-slavery, and the exploitation of ethnic, national, racial, and inter-regional disparities. This may not be easily discerned in the advanced capitalist nations where the creation of a wage-seeking labor force, along with its inner incongruities, evolved over centuries. But it should be more obvious as far as the areas of Western penetration are concerned, where a good deal of their capitalist history occurred in the last hundred years. Here, quite clearly, superior military power was the ultimate determining factor in obtaining the labor to dig the mines and harvest the plantation crops, as well as in creating the kind of money economy which prevails in these areas to this day. Whatever equality of exchange one may assume exists between the products of the metropoles and the periphery, one thing is obvious: it contains within it an inequality in wages that congeals a long and bitter history of force and oppression.

The costs that enter into prices are determined not only by the costs of living labor but also by the exertion of past, dead labor—the way labor was used to create harbors, canals, railroads, irrigation trenches, dams, factories, machinery, and equipment. On this score, striking disparities also obtain between, on the one hand, the kind of investments made in the imperialist centers, and, on the other hand, those made in the colonial periphery designed to serve the interests of the metropoles. The interests of the metropoles, it should be noted, included not only the means of transportation and communication needed to extract and export the resources of the periphery, but also those needed to effectuate the military occupation by an alien power. Furthermore, these and other so-called external economies were created to meet the particular needs of countries whose boundaries were artificially created in the foreign offices of London, Paris, and Berlin. Notably in Africa, the setting of boundaries and the resulting trade routes were the product of secret trade-offs and deals by the great powers—resembling, if anything, a parlor game of Monopoly, with com-

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plete indifference to either economic efficiency or the well-being of the people of the colonies.

Prices, of course, include profits as well as the costs of past and present labor: the profits of industrialists, landowners, bankers, and merchants. Here too, obviously, the power relations between, on the one hand, capital and labor in each country, and, on the other hand, capital in the metropole and in the periphery are of decisive significance. Thus, from whichever angle we approach the cost-price relations, we find that prices and costs are themselves the products of the social system and the current as well as the congealed past power relations of that system. The technical parameters which economists study are those that, at best, condition the manner in which the arrived-at social system behaves. That is why, if one wants to come to grips with the essentials of capitalism and imperialism, the investigation must be able to penetrate the screen created by the fetishism of commodities and commodity exchange. In one sense, prices and wages undoubtedly do reflect the exchange of equivalents. But these equivalents are the products of a specific historical process. They are far from God-given, eternal, and immutable; and by no means are they objectively necessary—except within the given historical and technological framework.

The equivalents of our time—created, as noted, by a social system and its particular history—are instruments which facilitate the efficient reproduction of the *existing* allocation of resources and of the *existing* property arrangements. In this context, prices and markets are impartial: they repeatedly reproduce the existing class structure of a society, the existing income distribution within a country, and the existing income differentials among countries. They are the impartial regulators of the attained capitalist institutions, and of the economic dependency of the periphery on the metropolis.

Tinkering with and reforming backward capitalisms will have little effect on basic social inequities, internal or external. For even honest provision of foreign aid, technical assistance, education for the elites, and peace-corps devices can—in the absence of a break-away from the imperialist network—at best only help make the imperialist system more efficient and perhaps extend its life somewhat. Reforms and "improvements" of

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this type cannot accomplish more, for the simple but profound reason that the historically arrived-at property, exchange, and wage system will continue relentlessly to reassert the imperialist relations of dependency. And this is why the primary task of the peoples of the Third World, as they struggle to throw off the shackles of imperialism and to achieve a humanitarian economic development, is the abolition of the capitalist system itself, with all that it implies with respect to price and wage relationships. This is an absolutely necessary condition—though in itself no guarantee of ultimate success—for entrance on the road to independence and development.

No wonder, then, that the academics have their troubles with such words as imperialism and capitalism, for it is around these concepts and the phenomena they define that the mass upheavals of our times are erupting. Bourgeois scholars naturally have difficulty facing up to either the fundamentals of revolutionary change or the processes whereby imperialism and capitalism will meet their doom. In this sense, Jalée's work, undertaken in the framework of a bold confrontation with the issues that involve the vast majority of the world's people, assumes its true significance. While in his two previous volumes on the subject he concentrated on the impact of imperialism on the Third World, he now engages in an analysis of the imperialist system as a whole, taking into account the view from the metropolis as well as from the periphery. He has no illusions that he has said the last word on the subject, but he most definitely opens the door to the kind of rigorous study needed by those who wish not only to interpret the world, but also to change it.

NOTES

1. A. P. Thornton, *The Imperial Idea and its Enemies* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1959), p. x.
2. David K. Fieldhouse, *The Economic Exploitation of Africa: Some British and French Comparisons* (mimeographed, no date), p. 1.
3. As to social taboos, one need only recall how London's respectable mid-Victorian critics venomously attacked Ibsen's *Ghosts* because it dealt openly with venereal disease.

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4. The background to this debate can be found in Bernard Semmel, *Imperialism and Social Reform* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1960), pp. 66-72.
5. G. B. Shaw, *Fabians and the Empire* (1900), as quoted in Annette T. Rubinstein, *The Great Tradition in English Literature: From Shakespeare to Shaw* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1969), vol. 2, p. 908.
6. To appreciate just some of the limitations in the real life of the corporate world, in contrast with the fantasies about the omnipotence and possible far-sightedness of the corporation, observe the nature of the cash liquidity crisis of 1970. For this, see "The Long-Run Decline in Liquidity," MONTHLY REVIEW (September 1970). An example of the limitations of the potential far-sightedness of the imperialist state can be seen in its inflation and dollar crisis. For this, see "The End of U.S. Hegemony," MONTHLY REVIEW (October 1971).
7. Karl Marx, *On the Question of Free Trade,* an address delivered in 1848 and reprinted as an appendix to Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy* (New York: International Publishers, 1969), p. 223.
8. It should be noted that in what Keynes would probably have included in his "underground of economics," some unorthodox liberal economists, disturbed by the too-flagrant contradiction between facts and theory, are questioning the validity of the comparative advantage doctrine as applied to the case of the underdeveloped nations.
9. S. Sideri, *Trade and Power, Informal Colonialism in Anglo-Portuguese Relations* (Rotterdam: Rotterdam University Press, 1970).
10. The treaty is named after John Methuen, who negotiated it for England. The full text of the treaty is given in Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations,* bk. 4, chap. 6, "Of Treaties of Commerce" (New York: Modern Library, 1937) pp. 512-513.
11. "According to the official figures, England achieved a surplus in her visible trade with Portugal in every year between 1700 and 1760." H. E. S. Fisher, *The Portugal Trade, A Study of Anglo-Portuguese Commerce 1700-1770* (London: Methuen & Co., 1971), p. 19.
12. Christopher Hill, *Reformation to Industrial Revolution* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1967), p. 187.
13. Carlo M. Cippola, *European Culture and European Expansion* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1970), p. 152.

Those who take the meat from the table
Teach contentment.
Those for whom the taxes are destined
Demand sacrifice.
Those who eat their fill speak to the hungry
Of wonderful times to come.
Those who lead the country into the abyss
Call ruling too difficult
For ordinary folk.

—Bertolt Brecht

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POLITICAL REPRESSION AND THE LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC STATE

BY ALAN WOLFE

Repression in a bourgeois-democratic society is not as clear-cut a phenomenon as it is under, say, a police dictatorship of a fascist order. The state seems to operate in contradictory fashion, smashing certain groups while ignoring others, the reason for the distinction not always being clear. At other times a political trial is proof of repression, while a verdict of innocence is taken as a sign that the state really is not so repressive after all. In short, the dynamics of how repression works in the liberal state are little understood, even by those who are repressed.

A full understanding of political repression would be obtained if a comprehensive theory of the state existed, because repression is a form of rule, a method of preserving capitalism.

That theory, however, does not yet exist; the political dimension of Marxism is one of the most poorly worked out.[1]* Thus, for the present, we shall not be able to understand completely the nature of political repression in democratic societies. But we can, at the very least, address ourselves to conceptions, shared to some extent by both liberals and radicals, which are

Alan Wolfe teaches political science at Staten Island Community College. He writes: "Helpful in working out these ideas with me were four good friends: Ike Balbus, Veronica Beechey, Mike Hirsch, and Kay Trimberger."

* Notes will be found at the end of the article.

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very likely incorrect. In that spirit, I offer the following seven propositions.

(1) *Repression is one of a number of reproductive mechanisms which capitalism requires in order to maintain itself as a system.* One of the most powerful notions in all of Marxist theory is the concept of reproductive mechanisms, those aspects of capitalism which tend to perpetuate traditional forms of institutions and behavior, as well as stabilizing new ones. Consumerism is a good example. The economic system requires that a goodly amount of products be manufactured. The very existence of such quantity creates a justification for quantity. To the extent that consumers come to depend on the existence of a certain number and kind of products, to that extent has capitalism created a mechanism for its own reproduction.

Matters cannot be left to the economy alone, however. One of the functions of a government is to create the conditions under which the system will be successfully reproduced. At certain points, there are more important ways to reproduce a society than by the ruling class acting alone in furtherance of its economic control over the society. At those times (some of which will be discussed shortly), the state is asked to play a major role in preserving the capitalist order. In doing this, the state can act in a number of ways, all of which are repressive in the sense that they are designed to stymie those forces which work for revolutionary change, but only one of which is generally called repression, i.e., the physical use of force or the threat of force by those in power to meet challenges to their legitimacy. In order that this discussion be generally understood, I will accept this distinction between repression and other reproductive mechanisms, so long as it is understood that all these tactics are dedicated to the same end—the maintenance of the order.

Repression can be understood by comparing it to these other non-terroristic reproductive mechanisms. One of them is clearly co-option, the blunting of a revolutionary challenge by partially accepting either some of its premises or some of its leaders, in the hopes of absorbing the threat. Similarly, political reform is a reproductive mechanism. There are times when

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sections of the ruling class become sponsors of reform in order to rationalize the system and make it work better. Each of these strategies has advantages and disadvantages to both the state and the revolutionary movement, but it is not my intention to go into them here. The point is that both of them are seen by rulers as conscious alternatives to repression, alternatives in the sense that they may obtain the same end at less cost.

The most important reproductive mechanism which does not involve the use of state violence is consciousness-manipulation. The liberal state has an enormous amount of violence at its disposal, but it is often reluctant to use it. Violence may breed counter-violence, leading to instability. It may be far better to manipulate consciousness to such an extent that most people would never think of engaging in the kinds of action which could be repressed. The most perfectly repressive (though not violently so) capitalist system, in other words, would not be a police state, but the complete opposite, one in which there were no police because there was nothing to police, everyone having accepted the legitimacy of that society and all its daily consequences.

Democratic societies, in general, stress consciousness-manipulation over violent repression to a greater degree than do other political forms of capitalism, though this may be changing at the moment, at least in the United States. This means that within liberal society a series of institutions—ranging from the family through schools, the media, the churches, athletics, etc.—will have a political function that sometimes meshes with and sometimes contradicts their other functions, be they child rearing, product-selling, knowledge-accumulating, or rest and relaxation. Those operating within these institutions often perceive the contradictions, as students did when they first began their critique of their university. In other words, there are times when attempts to manipulate consciousness fail because the contradictory nature of the institution reveals a hypocrisy which creates as many activists as it does passivists.

This discrepancy between the professed goals of a non-governmental institution and its actual reproductive consequences does not exist when the state itself becomes involved.

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The goal of a state propaganda apparatus is to coerce mentally, and little attempt is made to suggest anything else. The origins of a state propaganda machine in the United States can be traced back to George Creel's Committee on Public Information (CPI), designed to win support for the First World War (and the capitalist system) among the two groups whose support was least likely to be spontaneous: labor union members and immigrants. The CPI worked among Swedes, Danes, Norwegians, Finns, Italians, Czechs, Poles, Hungarians, Germans, Russians—twenty-four ethnic groups in all—utilizing secretly financed members of those groups and a variety of other covert practices. CPI functionaries sent material to all 745 foreign-language newspapers in the United States, attended conventions, published leaflets, and gave lectures.[2] Reviewing these efforts, Creel noted the systematic nature of this type of activity:

> The loyalty of "our aliens," however splendid as it was, had in it nothing of the spontaneous or the accidental. Results were obtained only by hard, driving work. The bitterness bred by years of neglect and injustice were not to be dissipated by any mere war-call, but had to be burned away by a continuous educational campaign.[3]

That campaign was continued, especially after the New Deal and the Second World War. The Harness Committee of the House of Representatives found in 1947 that the federal government spent $74,829,467 on publicity alone, while the 1950 Hoover Commission put the figure at $105 million.[4] It is impossible to estimate the current rate, but that it is much higher is indicated by the fact that the printing budget of the Army Department alone in 1970 was $43 million.[5] State-directed propaganda is now a permanent feature of the liberal democratic state.

Permanent consciousness-manipulation is only one reproductive mechanism. In spite of being heavily propagated, the ideology of capitalism is not always well received. When the mechanisms of consciousness-manipulation break down and threats to the stability of the system are real, then chances are that a new reproductive mechanism will be used: state violence, commonly called repression. This does not mean that all uses of

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state violence indicate that the other mechanisms have failed. Repression might be used because it is cheaper, because the spirit of a group has been broken and the state wishes to wipe it out, or for essentially irrational reasons having no apparent, coherent motivation. But in most cases, the existence of political repression testifies to a struggle taking place between those in control of the system and those trying to change the system's nature. The dynamics of that relationship is what much of the rest of this essay is about.

(2) *Repression is an essential aspect of liberal rule, not something alien to it.* The theory of liberal democracy, from Locke through Mill to the corporate liberalism of the twentieth century, is a series of agreements on how repression is to be practiced. Assume for the moment that liberalism's goals could actually be reached. The result would be something like the following: (a) access to the means of repression, open only to a few, would be egalitarian; anyone would have as likely a chance as anyone else to obtain the requisite positions; (b) the practice of repression would always be done according to certain well-defined rules and would never be arbitrary; and (c) any group would be as likely as any other group to be repressed, the distribution being without regard to class. That would be the case for an ideal liberal society, but none has so far existed. Instead, access to the means of repression is closed to most of the population, due process is rarely followed when it is against the interests of the state, and a ruling class exists which benefits from repression at the expense of those who challenge their rule. But phrased in this way, it is clear that much liberal criticism of repression covers only the failure to reach the ideal. What must be understood is that the ideal itself is a rationale for repression.

There is a reason for that. By its very nature, capitalism benefits a few at the expense of the many; if it did not, as Lenin once remarked, it would not be capitalism.[6] The maldistribution of rewards in the economic sector means that the political system is faced with an enormous task, which is to convince people that something which is not in their best interest *is* in their best interest. Liberal democracy, because it includes a political sphere in which access is slightly more ega-

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litarian than it is in the corporate order, is an ideal answer. And if the historical conditions are right, it is possible for a liberal democratic society to undertake its task under conditions of relative peace, relying on non-terroristic reproductive means to make its case. But class struggle is never muted for good. The more unequal the distribution of the economic rewards of the society, the greater will be the chance that challenges will arise, which means that the use of state violence will be that much more frequent. Hence the repressive nature of capitalism and the built-in repressive quality of that liberal theory (and practice) which has been designed to serve as its ideology.

Radicals do not always act on these premises; there is a tendency to think of one's own repression as unique. In his account of his own experience with the liberal state, for example, Tom Hayden noted:

> [The Chicago] trial . . . symbolized the beginning of full-scale repression in the United States. . . . Future histories will locate the sixties as the time when America's famous democratic pragmatism began hardening into an inflexible fascist core. . . . The pursuit of imperialism created a necessity for repression, even fascism, to stabilize the home front.[7]

Hayden is wrong. While any historical event is unique, there was nothing startlingly new about the Chicago trial. Judge Hoffman was no more notoriously idiosyncratic than the man who tried the IWW in 1919 (also in Chicago and also on a conspiracy charge), Judge (later Baseball Commissioner) Kenesaw Mountain Landis.[8] Nor was he more severe; sentences for the IWW defendants were much higher. Nor was the reaction of the defendants all that different. Some fled the country (just as some of those prosecuted in the Smith Act cases did, after their experience with another egocentrically repressive judge, Harold Medina), while others went on to further radical activity. If repression is basic to the society, certain methods, once found to work, will be repeatedly used. The Chicago trial was such a method. Far from being a unique event, it was part of a show which has had a long run.

(3) *The history of repression does not necessarily reveal a linear development.* There are two positions here which need

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examination. One held by liberals like Milton Konvitz is that the civil liberties of Americans have been continually on the rise, implying that state repression has continually decreased. The other position, generally associated with radicals like the late Bertrand Russell, is that the United States has increasingly become a repressive society, to the point where it may emerge into fascism.[9] Neither view is necessarily correct, though Russell comes closer to the truth than Konvitz.

One should avoid being abstract here, talking about repression as if it materialized out of thin air. It is not the amount of repression over time which is important, but the forms that repression takes. In fact, the amount of repression is probably a function of governmental output, i.e., the more the state is called upon to do, the more repression there will be, because that is one of the things it does. A discussion of the changing nature of repression, then, invariably implies a discussion of the changing nature of the capitalist state, of the shift from essentially private to essentially public activities.

In the latter part of the nineteenth century, while capitalism was still basically private, repression tended to be left in private hands. Corporations had their own police forces (or hired agencies like the Pinkertons) for purposes of breaking strikes. Even the non-terroristic reproductive mechanisms were private. In the town of Pullman, this was an exaggerated development in which the corporation controlled all information and nearly all private activities, including religion, a model which reveals in its clearest form the general case. However, as the entire corporate order became professionalized, with the state intervening to benefit the corporate class as a whole, the means of repression came to be centralized in the state. The crucial period, as James Weinstein has shown, was 1912-1920, when a new capitalist order emerged in which the state was to play a crucial role.[10]

In other words, it was liberalism which led to the modern repressive state and it was liberals who brought it into existence. In the search for ways of expanding state power in order to protect an emerging ruling class, it was a short step for progressive thinkers of the time to expand the repressive role of the state as well as its other aspects, especially when the force

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would be used against "unruly," "ill-behaved," "uncivil" elements who did not understand that politics required delicate balances among gentlemen. Only this paradox faced by liberals explains why the man who trained a whole generation of progressives to aid the state in extending its welfare privileges, Felix Frankfurter, could also be credited, as Melvyn Dubofsky so credits him, with developing the means for the destruction, through violent repression, of the Industrial Workers of the World.[11]

The modern repressive state was formed at the same time that the modern corporate state was formed—in the years of Woodrow Wilson. Consider some of the unique "firsts" of the Wilson administration. Besides the appointment of George Creel to head the first important state propaganda machine in the United States, Wilson's second administration also saw the following, more directly repressive, developments: the appointment of J. Edgar Hoover to head the Radical Division of the Justice Department;[12] the first extensive use of deportation as a political weapon;[13] the first use of systematic, nationally planned raids on the offices of local political groups;[14] the first use of a selective service system (and the first arrests, like that of Eugene Debs, for interference with its functioning);[15] the first important racial pogroms of the twentieth century (Omaha and Chicago), and the first co-ordinated effort by police to develop a strategy for controlling them, including co-ordinated police work and the publication of riot-control manuals;[16] the first intervention into the affairs of another country for purposes of containing an explicitly socialist revolution (because it was the first country to have an explicitly socialist revolution);[17] the first attempt by the government to take over the hiring of undercover agents to report on "subversive activity" (such as Francis Morrow, who became the agent who revealed the location of the Communist Party's Bridgman, Michigan meeting, leading to one of the largest political raids in American history);[18] the first extensive recruiting of labor leaders by the state to work directly in repressing their own memberships;[19] the creation of a Militia Bureau to centralize somewhat the use of state and federal troops (the Militia Bureau later became the National Guard);[20] and the first

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ruling by the Supreme Court interpreting the First Amendment in such a way as to provide a justification for governmental repression.[21] In addition, the same period also saw the federal trials of the IWW and the first general strike in American history.

Clearly, elements of all these things existed before 1919. And that year, which novelists like Dos Passos saw as a turning point in the development of America, represented a culmination of all these trends. It is therefore hardly good history to date the emergence of the modern repressive state to that time.[22] The story of state repression since 1919 has been one of refinement, one which has seen the emphasis shift from one reproductive mechanism to another. But it has not differed in any fundamental degree from what emerged during the Wilson administration.

Since that time, the amount of state violence actually used has varied up and down, though the repressive potential of the state has always been large. For example, use of the National Guard for explicitly political purposes—a good indication of violent repression—has varied tremendously. In the decade of the 1920s, the Guard was used 78 times, while from 1940 to 1949 it was used only 22 times. By comparison, the Guard was called out 25 times in 1967 alone and 101 times in 1968.[23] Such figures suggest that the use of violent repression is a cyclical phenomenon, high in some periods, low in others. A hypothesis might be that while there is almost always some violent repression (the Wilson administration, criminal syndicalism laws in the 1920s, strike-breaking in the 1930s, "relocation camps" in the 1940s, McCarthyism in the 1950s, what we just saw so much of, in the 1960s), it will decrease when there is little active struggle taking place and increase as other reproductive mechanisms break down. The important point is that such a hypothesis is not a commentary on the role of the state, which is by its nature repressive, but a comment on the role of a dissenting consciousness.

(4) *Repression is not a policy question; conventional thinking is confused as to who supports what kinds.* No administration, whether Democratic or Republican, can ever end repression. This point needs emphasis because—even if radicals

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understand it intellectually—there is still the unconscious feeling that a political leader like Nixon is "worse" than someone like Kennedy on the repression "issue." This is a variation on the theme of liberals like Richard Harris, who argue that John Mitchell inaugurated a new era of repression, turning his back on the liberal tolerance of Ramsey Clark.[24] Yet it was Clark himself who began the current wave of political trials through his indictment of Spock, Coffin, and their co-defendants.[25] In other words, no matter what their attitude toward political dissent when out of office, liberals like Ramsey Clark will act repressively when in office or find the office taken away from them.

To this point one might wish to argue that while both Democrats and Republicans will be repressive, there is a real difference between them, and that—unless one wishes to follow the disastrous policy of supporting quasi-fascistic leaders in order to make things worse so that they might then get better —one should see this difference in degree as vitally important. Such an argument holds or implies that liberals will place more of their faith in consciousness-manipulation and long-term repressive strategies, while conservative Republicans are more likely to use the police and military in order to get their way. Since the latter policy involves greater threats to human life, while the former presents more contradictions which can be exploited, the Republican-type approach should be avoided if possible.

The conventional wisdom on this point is strong. but it falls apart on close examination. The presidents most inclined to use the instruments of state violence for purposes of repression in this century have been liberal Democrats, not Republicans. Why, to cite one rather typical yet good example, did Woodrow Wilson spend so much time sending Debs to jail, and why was it Harding who freed him? The usual answer sees the repressive character of the Wilson administration as irrelevant to Wilson himself, as the fault of men like his Attorney General, A. Mitchell Palmer. Yet Wilson was quite aware of what his administration was doing. A more likely explanation is the one advanced above: liberals are much more likely to use the state as an instrument of corporate rule, playing a "progressive" role in helping the economy resolve, at least temporarily, some of

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its contradictions. As the state takes on a more positive role in the affairs of the citizenry, it is a small step to make the repressive role of the state more positive as well.

It follows that conservatives, who tend—at least in rhetoric, but also to some extent in practice—to rely on "individual initiative" rather than the state, will be reluctant to see the means of repression centralized in a federal bureaucracy in Washington. This has by and large been true. Eisenhower, for example, did not contribute as much to the growth of the FBI as Kennedy. And even though Eisenhower's attitude toward McCarthy was characterized by inconsistencies, who among the liberal democrats at the time was an outspoken opponent of that form of repression? This general conservative reluctance to use the state as an instrument of repression has been discussed candidly by the man most responsible for repression in the Nixon Administration, Deputy Attorney-General Richard Kleindienst. Asked if he felt that the liberal government of Pierre Trudeau in Canada had overreacted to political kidnappings, Kleindienst replied:

> We conservatives would not have reacted that way. Cool-headed Wall Street types—like Nixon, Mitchell, and me—would never respond emotionally. We would be conservative in invoking extraordinary powers. You liberals, on the other hand, you don't anticipate crises; you worry about upsetting constituencies. When you finally do act, things have gotten so far out of hand that you have to overreact. That's why liberals are more likely to invoke emergency powers than conservatives.[26]

Granted that mere words do not a policy make, and that the Nixon administration may be more repressive than Eisenhower, Harding, and Coolidge, nonetheless Kleindienst's point is worth considering.

(5) *The relationship between violent repression and the tactics of dissenting groups is probably the reverse of what is most often suggested.* In the world of the daily newspaper columnist and editorial writer, repression is "caused" by groups on the Left when they choose certain tactics. Such groups are urged not to engage in disruptive and militant activities because that will bring down the full power of the state against not only

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them but all right-thinking people as well. In one sense this argument is correct, for if there were no obvious and visible dissent, there would be no need for violent repression. But it is not an argument based on either the empirical evidence concerning the use of repression or the logic of the situation, as a few examples might make clear.

It has most often been the case that groups have been violently repressed, not when they have made their activities more militant and terroristic, but when they have softened their rhetoric and pursued mass-organizing techniques. The IWW, for example, was put on trial and raided just at the point when it stopped talking about armed self-defense and began to stress its non-violent aspects.[27] There is a logic to this. The continued escalation of rhetoric often comes about when a group has little mass support; revolutionary rhetoric then serves as a surrogate for the lack of anything else. Since little support exists, there is no real reason to repress because there is no real danger. In those periods, the role of the state is actually the opposite of trying to repress out of existence revolutionary rhetoric; in fact, through its undercover agents, the state seeks to encourage the group to engage in more terroristic words, not, as most people hold, in order to repress it later, but to isolate it from a mass base. If a group gets through that period and does begin to organize, then its rhetoric and tactics will become decidedly less militant and terroristic, as if almost by law. But it is at that point, when the state's policy of encouraging more militance breaks down, that the use of violence by the state is substituted as a form of repression, because that is when the group is most dangerous. It is interesting that the most severe repression of the Black Panther party came, not after it carried guns into the California legislature, but after it instituted a program of free breakfasts.

It should also be pointed out that there are times when the tactics of dissenting groups have nothing to do with repression. Because of its ties to the Soviet Union, the U.S. Communist party was continually under siege by the government of the United States. After the Second World War the government moved to destroy it, and it was irrelevant whether the CP adopted a popular front line or an ultra-leftist line. Thus

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even in situations like this, the point holds that the state's decision to use repression is not determined by a dissenting group's choice of tactics but by the state itself.

(6) *Repressive forces are not omnipresent and impenetrable.* It is fairly easy to overestimate the potential danger of repression, if the number of people who do so is any indication. At times, for example, Herbert Marcuse can be read in such a way that there is almost no hope for those struggling to create a non-repressive society.[28] The means of repression are so subtle, so internalized, so changed from basically political phenomena to basically psychic ones, that even a struggle for liberation can actually be part of a repressive strategy. In contrast, I would argue that the strength of repression is about as great as the strength of the capitalist system it is designed to support. And since the system is rendered unstable and ultimately self-destructive by its internal contradictions, so the repressive apparatus is replete with paradoxes which, while not rendering it impotent, at least make it vulnerable to some forms of attack.

For example, there are times in the development of the liberal state when the very means of consciousness-manipulation create the basis for radicalization. In most urban high schools at the moment, students are either on drugs (in the case of heroin, clearly a form of repression) or are enemies of those who run the schools and, in that sense, also of the state. Originally designed to foster obedience and teach traditions, American public secondary schools currently do neither: they are vast breeding grounds for discontent, even though there are ruling-class spokesmen (like Charles Silberman) who realize this and periodically make eloquent pleas to reform the schools.[29] Perhaps this is because the schools simply cannot do what the society asks of them in the face of enormous political and cultural change. The same is true of many other institutions. It is the nuclear family which is responsible for the commune and the collective, the media which created the underground newspapers, religion which breeds agnosticism or the search for new spiritualism, work which creates alienation and discontent. The new society is being born of the old, and the attempts by the old to reinforce patterns which have become

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illegitimate in the eyes of many simply create further illegitimacy.

Increased use of the means of state violence—repression—is a response to those breakdowns. Often, in a short-term sense, this violence may be effective. Repression of the Black Panther party seems to have destroyed the viability of that organization. The McCarthy period clearly stifled political discussion for a long time. Yet even in spite of that effectiveness, such repression creates its own problems. Out of the experience of the Panthers black groupings have arisen in parts of the country which are consciously trying to avoid the pattern into which the Panthers fell. And the McCarthy period, effective for a while, may just have postponed a confrontation with virulent anti-communism until the present time. But the best example of the paradoxical nature of such repression is the Chicago Eight trial. Whatever the motive of the government in prosecuting, that event contributed to massive feelings of illegitimacy toward the state on the part of young people throughout the country. It confirmed for many the idea that something is fundamentally wrong with America, for the obvious reason—but one that it is essential to continually remember—that something *is* fundamentally wrong with America. It was not "we" who thought up that trial but "they"; they acted as we expected them to act, which is all we could have asked of them.

There may well be times when repressive policies force political groups into dilemmas from which there is no easy way out. But there are also times when the rulers of the democratic state face impossible situations as well. Should Lt. Calley be found guilty? If the answer is no, then an indictment of the entire army is the result. If the answer is yes, then troops will be encouraged not to shoot in Vietnam. What made this dilemma (for them) real was the massive opposition to the war on the part of most Americans and many soldiers. That consciousness forced the Army into a position from which it could not extricate itself simply. For a moment in history, it was the army, not the antiwar movement, which was up against the wall.

The state's use of repression is also hindered, particularly in liberal democracies, by a rhetorical commitment to due process. Originally an aspect of liberal thought, because it af-

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forded protection to businessmen to accumulate capital undisturbed, due process of law has increasingly been interpreted by the courts to apply to civil liberty cases. This does not mean an end to repression; it means that repression should not be arbitrary. For example, after the May Day events of 1971 in Washington, the American Civil Liberties Union ran a full-page ad critical of the Nixon Administration's handling of the arrests, suggesting that the same goal—keeping the government functioning—could have been obtained by means more in keeping with the Bill of Rights. There are, then, people who are interested in procedure to the point where ends are irrelevant, and often their voices are eloquent, sometimes even influential.

The development of a concern with civil liberty does complicate matters for the repressors. They are not free to switch back and forth in a search for the best repressive policy. Traditions and procedures do play a role, and it is perfectly natural that dissenting groups, when being repressed, will exploit these contradictions and use procedures and traditions to protect themselves whenever possible. It is also clear that to the extent that the tradition of civil liberty is near extinction, the threat comes from those who wield state power, not from those who challenge them.

(7) *It follows from this that the use of violent repression by the state could easily be a sign of its weakness, not its strength.* The ruling class is armed and dangerous; of that there is no doubt. It possesses an enormous amount of destructive weaponry, and—as the case of Fred Hampton indicates—it is not afraid to use it. It is clearly an error to take a Pollyannaish view of such a violent potential. But though tigers they may be, there is some truth in Mao's dictum that the tigers may be made of paper, and the reasons for that should be stated.

Violent repression exists because there is struggle; without a political movement, there need not be any repression. Instead of reacting with hurt surprise at the existence of such repression, and instead of simply calling for civil liberty—which means acting in a civil fashion—that repression should be understood as an opportunity to teach something about the nature of the

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liberal state. When a repressive society acts repressively, it is, in other words, doing what it is supposed to do. If it acted in any other way—say, by appointing members of the Black Panther Party to commissions instead of raiding their offices—it would not be what it is. This is a simple point, but it has taken a while for it to sink home. The defendants in the Spock trial, from this perspective, acted wrongly in restricting themselves to an insistence on procedure and fairness. They were found guilty anyway. On the other hand, the defendants in the Chicago trial had a remarkably sophisticated understanding of what repression meant. They used the trial in a political way, proper because it was a political trial. By their response, they put the government on trial for trying them, and they even won some sympathy from the jury in doing that. (This, plus the astounding support from the jury received by the Panther Thirteen, where an alliance was created between defendants and jury against the credibility of the state, indicates that such a strategy need not mean an automatic jail sentence.) Both groups used their trials to expand the political movement which brought them to trial, and they undoubtedly had an important effect upon the consciousness of, in the one case, young people and, in the other, black people.

Since non-terroristic reproductive mechanisms are generally preferred by the rulers of the bourgeois-democratic state, when state violence is used it is most likely an indication that affairs have not been running smoothly. In that sense, it indicates a crisis for the state, a period in which the ruling class is so unsure of its rule that it seeks the protection that only troops and police can provide, which turns out to be ambiguous protection at best. It follows that those periods which see an increase in violent repression are the same periods in which dissenting groups are most successfully building their movement. The present moment is such a time. The extraordinary number of political trials (Chicago Eight, Harlem Five, Panther Thirteen, Spock, draft resistance cases, drug frame-ups, indictments of May Day organizers, etc.), the return to raids and evidence-seizures, the drastic increase in the use of National Guard troops, and the revelations of the use of infiltrators and informers do not necessarily mean that the democratic state is

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turning into a fascistic-type police state, as some on the Left feel. That can only take place when there is no important progressive movement. On the contrary, the increase in violent repression is a response to a progressive movement (and its potential) and is being determined by that movement itself. If the movement went away, so would violent repression. In other words, it is not the tactics of any one group which affects repression, but the state of the movement as a whole.

If the reactionaries are paper tigers, it is because time is not on their side. Those who see fascism as inevitably coming out of the repressive potential of the democratic state give more time to the rulers of that state than they actually have; they give them more credit than they deserve. It is true that there is a fascist potential in liberal-democratic societies, but it is just as true that socialist movements—in the United States and abroad—have the potential to prevent that from materializing. Why assume that one side will win and not the other? Those who are disillusioned by the amount of state violence in the United States are those who had illusions about the democratic state in the first place. If we understand that repression is used out of desperation, we are one step closer to understanding how a non-repressive society can be built.

NOTES

1. The most interesting attempt to work on this problem is Nicos Poulantzas, *Pouvoir Politique et Classes Sociales* (Paris: François Maspero, 1968). See also Ralph Miliband, *The State in Capitalist Society* (New York: Basic Books, 1969).
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4. Final Report of the Subcommittee on Publicity and Propaganda (Harness Committee), *Twenty-Third Intermediate Report of the Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1949). 80th Congress, Second Session. House Report No. 2474. The figure cited is from a summary of the Report, *Congressional Record,* vol. 96, part 17, p. A6861. 81st

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5. Appendix, *The Budget of the United States (Fiscal Year 1971)* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1970), p. 274.
6. V. I. Lenin, *Imperialism* (New York: International Publishers, 1939), p. 63.
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10. James Weinstein, *The Corporate Ideal in the Liberal State* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968).
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21. *Schenck v. United States,* 249 U.S. 47 (1919).
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23. These figures were compiled from a variety of sources, including: *Annual Report of the Chief of the Militia Bureau* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1920-1932); *Annual Report of the Chief of the National Guard Bureau* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1933-1969); *New York Times* (various issues, 1919-1969); and Philip Taft and Philip Ross, "American Labor Violence: Its Causes, Character, and Outcome," in Hugh Davis Graham and Ted Robert Gurr, *Violence in America* (New York: Signet Books, 1969), pp. 270-376.
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THE POLITICS OF EDUCATION

By Herb Gintis

Crisis in the Classroom by Charles Silberman. New York: Random House, 1970. 226 pp. $8.95; paperback, $2.45.

Crisis in the Classroom is a major restatement and partial emendation of the grand liberal view of schooling in its relation to personal development and the larger social order of advanced capitalism. Charles Silberman's contribution to the running debate concerning "educational reform" is a veritable *tour de force*. One must look back to John Dewey's turn-of-the-century *Education and Democracy* for scope and incisiveness comparable to Silberman's. His merit lies neither in originality (he does not possess it) nor in tight and careful analysis (he is a rather loose and journalistic writer), but rather in his creative, sober, and forward-looking synthesis of the various fragmented strands of modern bourgeois educational philosophy and empirical research.

For a most coherent review of liberal theory, experiment, and social strategy in this area, *Crisis in the Classroom* is the book to read. Indeed, for anyone seriously in American education, it is a must. The author ranges from the broad structure of American education and the sociology of classroom relations to the particulars of curriculum content. His approach is, moreover, explicitly problem-oriented. While he passes over a general treatment of

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social class inequality in education, his discussion of the educational system's handling of racial minorities and the poor is extensive and well focussed. Silberman deals with equal facility with the allegedly "non-economic" aspects of American education, describing, documenting, and analyzing the authoritarian and repressive structure of capitalist education.

Silberman is refreshingly incisive, objective, and ruthless in dealing with the dismal failure of past and present government policies and liberal movements directed at narrow educational reform—"equal opportunity," "compensatory education," racial integration of schools, as well as the more broad-ranging progressive movement for the "humanization" of schooling and truly imaginative curriculum reform.

Nor is Silberman merely critical. Indeed, it is a major argument of the book that there exist numerous working examples of schools which are truly egalitarian, which solve the problem of "underachievement" in "disadvantaged youth," and which supply a liberating atmosphere within which students can develop creative self-expression, personal control, and autonomy, without sacrificing academic achievement. Silberman's positive recommendations are, moreover, of potential political importance, in that his study was commissioned for and financed by the Carnegie Foundation, long a pace-setter in liberal "educational reforms." His examples of "informal education" in England and the United States are likely to find their way into the political platforms of traditional parties in the coming decade.

It is difficult to find fault with Silberman's *description* of American education. He documents "what grim, joyless places most American schools are, how oppressive and petty are the rules by which they are governed, how intellectually sterile and esthetically barren the atmosphere, what an appalling lack of civility obtains on the part of teachers and principals, what contempt they unconsciously display for children as children." He argues that "far from being 'the great equalizer,' the schools help perpetuate the differences in condition, or at the very least, do little to reduce them." Lastly, he characterizes educational reform as "a movement that aroused such great hopes, and that enlisted so many distinguished educators, [but] exert[ed] little impact on the schools."

Turning to the *causes* of unequal and repressive education and the *reasons* for the failure of reform, however, Silberman betrays the basic weakness of the liberal educational theorist: a consistent and thorough refusal to analyze the links between the educational

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system and the relations of capitalist economic organization. Nor is this shortcoming characteristic of Silberman alone. Indeed it is curious that the most exciting and creative of the writers on education today—John Holt, Herbert Kohl, Jonathan Kozol, Ivan Illich, Paul Goodman, Edgar Friedenberg, and George Leonard—are also oblivious to the requirements the economy places on the organization and operation of the schools. To this extent, my remarks apply to these writers as well as to Silberman.

This blindness leads Silberman inexorably to attribute the darker aspects of American education to "irrationality," simple mistakes, oversights, and atavisms in its historical development. In reinforcing social-class identification from generation to generation, schools have merely exhibited "poor performance," and must do "a better job." Correction can take place within the school system, without greatly altering institutions of the larger society. For example, "if the United States is to become a truly just and humane society, the schools will have to do an incomparably better job than they are now doing of educating youngsters from minority-group and lower-class homes," and that is all there is to it. The idea that stabilization of social-class lines might be necessary and inherent to the logic of capitalist production is nowhere even entertained. Moreover, while arguing that our schools attempt to produce psychologically stunted individuals incapable of creative initiative and control over their lives, Silberman gives not the slightest indication that this might be functional in an economy in which workers are divorced from control over their personal and group activities in factory, office, and community. Rather, repressive education appears to Silberman as an "error": "What is wrong with elementary and secondary education—or for that matter, higher education, journalism, television, social work, and so on—has less to do with incompetence or indifference or venality than with mindlessness." The only question involved for him is the *type* of human error. Rather than ask what sorts of changes in the social relations of education are compatible with supplying workers "properly equipped" to assume and accept their roles in a capitalist economy, Silberman contents himself with the less important and ideologically neutral question of academic adequacy. That "schools can be humane and free without in any way sacrificing intellectual development" is about his only contribution to this issue.

Given his theoretical inadequacy, it is not surprising that Silberman also attributes the failure of educational *reform* to a series

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of "fatal errors" and "mindlessness." Almost every educational ill, he maintains, can be cured through changes in teacher attitudes, instructional practices, educational philosophy, and habits of relating to students. (Nearly a third of the book is devoted to the "re-education of teachers.") Indeed, Silberman provides cogent evidence that blacks and other "culturally disadvantaged" groups *can* achieve in a non-repressive school atmosphere which respects their cultural identity and shows faith in their individual capacities to succeed; that for all social classes, "liberating" education enhances rather than limits academic and intellectual development; and that it is possible to re-educate teachers—on a fairly large scale—to reorient their teaching practices and attitudes in "desirable" directions.

Thus Silberman finds himself in the unenviable position, having described all *previous* attempts at reform as failures, of entertaining the most positive enthusiasm for future attempts at reform. He does not doubt that "mindlessness" can be successfully corrected and "fatal errors" avoided. An "irrational" educational system can thus be rendered progressively rational.

My understanding of educational theory and practice leads me to believe Silberman is correct. But my understanding of the realities and requirements of capitalist development leads me to believe equally firmly that such reforms would be impossibly threatening to the capitalist order. One of two conclusions follows: either such reforms would not be allowed, by those in power, to take place, or if the latter succumb to Silberman's liberal ideology (which is unlikely, but not impossible), they would contribute seriously to the disintegration of social cohesion and the development of anti-capitalist consciousness.

An educational system in any society must produce individuals motivated to assume essential adult roles—among which economic roles are the most salient—and equipped with proper values, attitudes, and personality traits, enabling them to function adequately and accept their position in these roles. In capitalist society most individuals are wage or salary laborers. That is, they sell their labor power on a market, are motivated to produce by the external reward of wage-status differentials, and have no power over their work activities, save such as the capitalist or managerial elite deems advisable to delegate to them. Thus, what a boss desires in a worker is not only the cognitive skills necessary to his job, but a motivational structure in which wage-status rewards are paramount, as well as proper discipline, subordination, a certain limited and cir-

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cumscribed initiative, and the ability to function well in a work situation providing little in the way of intrinsic satisfaction.

Such patterns of psychic orientation are certainly not part of "human nature," and are found on a mass scale only in modern industrial economies characterized by authoritarian and hierarchical power relations in production. There is little doubt that the educational system is a major contributor to the generation and reproduction of these psychic patterns. The schools perform this function, in the first instance, by mirroring, in their internal structure, the social relations of capitalist production. Just as workers are alienated from their work activities (the *process* of production) and their product (the *goal* of production), in the sense that they have no control over their form and content, so students are alienated from the activity of learning (process) and from any control over the personal outcomes of the learning process (goal). Silberman, while not making the analogy, does point out this aspect of American education: "As one student summed it up, 'it's all a question of what they want to produce, not what we want to become.' The result, at best, is to persuade students that knowledge has no relation to them, no relevance for the kinds of lives they will lead: at worst, it produces the kind of alienation, the rejection of authority, the rejection of the whole notion of culture, of discipline, and of learning with which we are now contending." The result of the worker's lack of control in production is that the objective attributes of the work process conform, not to this personal need for solidarity and creative initiative, but to the norms of hierarchical control and capitalist profit. Thus he is not motivated to perform by intrinsic characteristics of his activity or its social function, but by an *external* reward—pay and relative status. Similarly, the student is taught to be motivated not by the process of learning or its goal (knowledge, skills, social capacities), but by an external reward in the form of grades and promotion. This mirroring of the social relations of production in the social relations of education is instrumental in preparing the properly motivated worker in a system of alienated production.

Thus the authoritarianism of the schools is not "irrational," but logical to the reproduction of capitalism. Here Silberman, in quoting Phillip W. Jackson approvingly, puts the finger on the essential relationship, without, however, "confusing" his presentation by carrying this analysis to its logical conclusion:

"Work entails becoming engaged in a purposeful activity that has been prescribed for us by someone else, an activity in which

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we would not at that moment be engaged if it were not for some system of authority relationships," Jackson explains. "The teacher, with his prescriptive dicta and his surveillance over the student's attention, provides the missing ingredient that makes work real. The teacher, although he may disclaim the title, is the student's first 'boss.' "

Yet all the elements for carrying this analysis to its logical conclusion are present in Silberman's descriptions of school life. Alienated education, like alienated work, requires, in the first instance, docility:

Item: In lecturing the assembled students on the need for and virtue of absolute silence, an elementary school principal expostulates on the wonders of a school for the "deaf and dumb" he had recently visited. The silence was just wonderful, he tells the assembly; the children could all get their work done because of the total silence. The goal is explicit: to turn normal children into youngsters behaving as though they were missing two of their faculties.

No less, it requires proper subordination and sensitivity to the whims and desires of those in positions of authority. Again, Silberman:

Almost from the first day, students learn that the game is not to acquire knowledge but to discover what answer the teacher wants, and in what form she wants it; there are few classroom scenes more familiar than that of the teacher brushing aside or penalizing correct answers that don't happen to be the ones she had in mind. . . . It quickly becomes clear that approaching a question on a test by saying "What is my own response to this question?" is risky indeed, and totally unwise if one covets the highest grade possible (and the school system teaches the student that he should). Rather, the real question is clear to any student who knows anything about how schools work, "What is the answer the teacher wants me to give? What can I write that will please the teacher?"

Some of this wears off in later life, but the basic attitudes persist. Lastly, proper training of alienated labor requires not simply rational self-discipline, but unchallenged discipline in the face of absolute authority. Is this found in schools? Silberman cites one school's regulations as characteristic of pre-college education in general: "Students should move from one area to another within a four-minute period following the module tone. There will be no movement through the halls, nor will any student be in the halls,

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except by written permission from a teacher, at any time other than during the four minutes following the module tone. . . ."

In short, the more immediate aspects of the class struggle under capitalism—the worker-boss conflict and its perpetual resolutions in favor of the latter—are reproduced daily in the school, thus preparing the individual for the realities of adult life. Here once more, Silberman, in favorably citing Willard Waller, describes the situation without acknowledging its social function: "The teacher-student relationship in its conventional form is, as Willard Waller states, 'a form of institutionalized dominance and subordination. Teacher and pupil confront each other in the school with an original conflict of desires, and however much that conflict may be reduced in amount, or however much it may be hidden, it still remains.' "

Nor is the above relation between schooling and the economy mere analogy. My own research indicates that there is involved a *concrete causal relationship*. Employers value and pay more for more highly educated labor, *not* primarily because of their greater cognitive skills, but for their "more favorable attitudes and work habits." That is, two individuals with identical intellectual achievement but differing educational levels (e.g., 10th grade vs. 12th) will not command, on the average, the same income and status. Rather, the economic success of each will correspond closely to the average for his or her educational level. In other words, all individuals with the *same* level of education tend to have the *same* economic success on the average (racial and sexual discrimination aside), almost *independently* of their scholastic achievement. Moreover, students are by no means graded on the basis of academic achievement alone, but are rewarded and penalized depending on whether they do or do not exhibit those personality traits required in a system of hierarchical production. The presumption is, therefore, that it is for these traits that bosses are paying.

I conclude that the authoritarian structure of American education is not "irrational," nor is it due to "mindlessness" on the part of educators. Yet Silberman bases his argument for liberal reform squarely on this assumption:

> The "necessity" that makes schooling so [repressive] . . . is simply the "necessity" that stems from unexamined assumptions and unquestioned behavior. The preoccupation with order and control, the slavish adherence to the timetable and lesson plan, the obsession with routine *qua* routine, the absence of noise and movement, the joylessness and repression, the universality of the formal

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lecture or teacher-dominated "discussion" in which the teacher instructs an entire class as a unit, the emphasis of the verbal and de-emphasis of the concrete, the inability of students to work on their own, the dichotomy between work and play—none of these are necessary; all can be eliminated.

It is reasonable to say, with Silberman, that "schools can be humane and still educate well." But not, I fear, under capitalism, or any "alternative" which maintains a system of alienated production.

Nor is such reform possible without the active participation of teachers. Yet it is clear that this participation requires far more than Silberman's prescribed "teacher re-education." For teachers are bound, as are all of us in our relations with others, to reflect in their relation to students a mentality established through their own day-to-day *experience,* not that of an abstract educational philosophy. And teachers are "bosses" only in the immediate environment of the classroom. In all other respects they are workers, essentially powerless in a bureaucratic and hierarchically ordered environment, and hence tend to reproduce in more or less pure form the experience of alienated production. Here Silberman is essentially correct in attributing "that peculiar blight which affects the teacher mind, which creeps over it gradually, and, possessing it bit by bit, devours its creative resources" to "the atmosphere of meanness and distrust in which teachers work; they punch time clocks like factory workers or clerks and are rarely if ever consulted about things that concern them most, such as the content of the curriculum or the selection of textbooks. And there are the conditions of work themselves: teaching loads that provide no time for reflection or for privacy." Thus the possibility of a "liberating" educational system vis-à-vis students hinges on the elimination of hierarchical order in the teaching "industry" itself, and hence is part of the larger workers' movement for control of production.

The same descriptive accuracy and theoretical weakness characterize Silberman's treatment of education and inequality. Silberman fails to see that the educational system merely *stabilizes* and *reproduces* the social stratification of the larger society, and could scarcely do otherwise without serious disruption to the capitalist system. Stratification begins, in the first instance, in the system of work relations. In the early stages of capitalist development, unequal power takes the form of the separation of the mass of individuals from control over the non-human means of production. In this period, this separation has the tendency to "homo-

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genize" the working class—all workers are reduced to essential equality in disposing of their labor power on the capitalist market. With the replacement of simple entrepreneur "bosses" controlling a number of more or less equal workers with the aid of a few intermediaries (e.g., a foreman) by corporate capital, several crucial changes occur, shifting this tendency from one of *homogenization*, to one of *stratification*. The most important of these is the bureaucratization of production and administration: an increase in the number of levels in the hierarchy of production (menial and skilled blue-collar, low- and high-level white-collar, managerial), and a relative equalization of numbers of workers in the various non-managerial strata. This inequality is built into the "social technology" of corporate production, the educational system having little effect on this inequality in one direction or another.

But only the most naive bourgeois apologists argue that educational reform can significantly decrease inequality *per se*. Like Silberman, they argue only that such reform can create "equal opportunity" in the distribution of unequal positions: the future occupational status and income of a child can be rendered significantly independent of his social class background. In this context, the fact that existing education is unequal cannot be considered a simple "irrationality." It is amply clear that higher strata within the working class (some white-collar workers) in team with owners of capital, have the economic power collectively to enhance the positions of their offspring, and they use this power quite liberally and consciously. Nonetheless, educational equality is at least a theoretical possibility.

But would such "equality of opportunity" significantly increase inter-generational mobility? Probably not. If the skills that bosses pay for and that determine who gets what jobs were basically cognitive and academic, the situation might be quite different. For as we have seen, schools are the *major* source of cognitive development, equalization of such development across social classes being far from impossible. But what is important to bosses is *not* such skills—which are available in abundance and easily developed on the job—but the worker's basic values, attitudes, aspirations, and personality suitable to a particular stratum in the production hierarchy; or his "social presentation" (dress, manner of speech, personal identification, and loyalties) if he is in a position of some initiative, or intermediate authority, or must deal with customers and suppliers. Such individual traits are "honed up" in schools, but are developed in the closer environment of family life. Yet it is clear that in essential respects, the way par-

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ents raise their children—the modes of "social presentation," motivation, and personality which they impart—tends to reflect their positions and experiences in production. Indeed, these experiences form the basis of commonly observed "social class subcultures": the social relations of family and community life come to mirror the position of the family and community members in an economic stratum. Schools cannot fundamentally alter these patterns of social-class-biased socialization, although they can play an important role in their reinforcement and stabilization.

Not only are class subcultures *produced by,* and a *reflection of,* the hierarchical stratification of production, they are in turn *necessary to* the reproduction of a properly socialized labor force. Different social strata must exhibit divergent cultural characteristics in order that a sufficient number of individuals should be supplied to each of the separate strata in production. The necessity of such functional stratification is not understood by Silberman, who approvingly quotes Dewey: "What the best and wisest parent wants for his own child, . . . that must the community want for all of its children. Any other idea for our schools is narrow and unlovely; acted upon, it destroys our democracy." The idea of the "best and wisest parents" is nevertheless part of the myth of America as a classless society. What is "good" and "wise" depends on social-class position, and it would be folly to attempt to impose a truly *common* culture and *uniform* set of aspirations on all individuals. Just as in the case of equality of economic outcomes, the ability of schools to promote inter-generational mobility beyond certain limited margins is thwarted by the logic of capitalist economic organization.

Classless education is fundamental to the reproduction of a classless society—of which capitalism is not an example. This is not to say that classless education is *impossible* in the United States. It means only that such education, by explicitly breaking down the ideology of stratification on which the acceptance of hierarchical authority is based, would represent a fundamental onslaught on the power relations of capitalist society. This, however, is far from Silberman's "liberal reform."

I conclude that true educational reform—the abolition of unequal and repressive education—is possible, but revolutionary. This leads us to a final, and related, element in Silberman's analysis—the causes of current educational ferment in high school and university. To say that discontent is on the rise *because* schools are unequal and repressive is, of course, absurd. Schools have *always* been unequal and repressive. Why critical levels of discontent *now?*

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In this review, I have argued that there is an important "correspondence principle": the social relations of education come to reflect the social relations of production in the larger society. Accepting this, we conclude that the development of contradictions and struggles within the educational system is likely to reflect, in turn, contradictions and struggles in the larger society. Silberman seems to realize this in arguing that "the crisis in the classroom . . . [mirrors] . . . the crisis of American society as a whole."

But Silberman locates the "crisis of consciousness" in America today, not in the logic of an historic dynamic, not in the development of pressing contradictions in the fabric of institutional life, but in the irrationality and short-sightedness of "human nature":

> The crisis stems more from the successes of American society than from its failure. . . . In almost every area, improvements beyond what anyone thought possible fifty or twenty-five or even ten years ago have produced anger and anxiety rather than satisfaction. . . . One reason, without question, is the improvements themselves, together with the spate of social legislation passed in the 1960s, [which] generated expectations for further improvements—improvements of a sort and at a rate that the society was unable, or unwilling, to fulfill.

Thus a "revolution of rising expectations" occurs because "it is only when men sense the possibility of improvement, in fact, that they become dissatisfied with their situation and rebel against it." And such short-sightedness is irrational in that "this retroactive impatience over things previously accepted in turn leads men to misconstrue improvement in their condition as deterioration, for the improvement rarely keeps pace with their expectations."

Yet Silberman's explanation is unabashedly *post hoc*. Had discontent *not* arisen, it would no doubt have been explained by the "historical successes of American capitalism." Yet the same success is given as the cause of discontent when it does pop up! Here Silberman is not wrong—merely inadequate. Even a thoroughgoing historical-materialist approach admits as an analytical cornerstone that the logic of success of a social system must be a critical element in the logic of its failure. But in Marxist theory, the contribution of success to failure occurs not via shortcomings and irrationalities in "human nature," but via concrete contradictions in the social fabric generated in the normal operation of the system's institutions. Discontent is thus explained, not explained away.

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Silberman's failing in this respect is, however, of little importance—to him. If equal and liberating education *is* compatible with American capitalism (his assumption), the short-sightedness of reformers that leads to such bitter single-mindedness in the pursuit of their goals can only hasten their arrival. The understanding of the politics of education as a reflection of modern contradictions in advanced capitalism and the contemporary "class struggle" becomes relevant only when we understand "just and free education" and "capitalist education" as factually incompatible. For only in this way can the enthusiastic ferment of radical reform be translated into effective political action in an era of rising socialist consciousness.

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IDEOLOGY AND REVOLUTION

By Paul Le Blanc

Barrios in Arms, Revolution in Santo Domingo, by José A. Moreno. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1969. 226 pp. $8.95.

In April 1965, José Moreno was working on his doctoral thesis in sociology (for Cornell University)—investigating "structural anomie in medium-sized organizations" in the Dominican Republic. Unknown to him, a conspiracy of young liberal army officers and supporters of Social Democrat Juan Bosch was preparing a coup to re-establish the democratic constitution and to put the ousted Bosch back in office. But something "went wrong," and a spontaneous popular uprising was sparked in Santo Domingo. The nearly defeated reactionaries were saved only by the arrival and active support of several thousand U.S. marines. Meanwhile, Moreno found himself in the midst of a revolutionary upsurge.

A left-liberal priest of Cuban origin (who has since left the priesthood for personal reasons), his sympathies were with the rebels, especially the Social Christian Revolutionary Party and Bosch's Dominican Revolutionary Party. He chose to help organize medical clinics and food distribution centers in the rebel zones during the four months that followed, and this brought him in daily contact with top rebel leaders, members of political organizations and irregular commando groups, and ordinary citizens in the neighborhood.

Adequate chronological accounts of the events in Santo Domingo have been provided by such liberals as Tad Szulc and Theodore Draper, and crucial interpretations have appeared in such periodicals as MONTHLY REVIEW (September 1965). But José Moreno's *Barrios in Arms* goes much deeper in giving us a grasp of what happened on the rebels' side of the barricades—and also

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illuminates questions of great importance to scholars and revolutionaries alike: the nature of ideology, the dynamics of popular uprisings, the role of a revolutionary vanguard.

Over ten years ago, Daniel Bell asserted that "the old ideologies have lost their 'truth' and their power to persuade" in advanced capitalist countries, while in the Third World "the mass ideologies . . . are parochial, instrumental, and created by political leaders" for purposes of enhancing "economic development and national power."

Yet Moreno demonstrates that the goals articulated by the spokesmen and motivating the rank-and-file of the rebel forces involved a desire for social reforms to improve the quality of life for the lower classes (workers and peasants), a desire to achieve a redistribution of wealth and power which would give the majority of people greater control over the forces shaping their lives. The democratic constitution of 1963 and the presidency of Juan Bosch symbolized these things, and people fought for them. Far from being "parochial," such desires are relevant to all of the underdeveloped countries and—with certain modifications—in the advanced industrial nations as well.

The differences between the ways Bell and Moreno understand and define the concept of ideology are profoundly significant. Bell defines ideology as "an all-inclusive system of comprehending reality, . . . a set of beliefs infused with passion . . . [which] seeks to transform the whole way of life." He also asserts that "ideology is the conversion of ideas into social levers," and he describes its function in the following terms: "A social movement can rouse people when it can do three things: simplify ideas, establish a claim to truth, and, in the union of the two, demand a commitment to action. Thus, not only does ideology transform ideas, it transforms people as well." Elsewhere he has expressed the same idea with more of an emotional edge: "Ideologies . . . [are] organized systems of belief with ready formulas for the manipulation of the masses. . . ."

The elitism inherent in such a definition is made explicit by Bell himself. Seeing ideology as "a secular religion," he writes: "The analysis of ideology belongs properly in the discussion of the intelligentsia. One can say that what the priest is to religion, the intellectual is to ideology." If the priests become atheists, ideology quite simply comes to an end.

Moreno, on the other hand, seems to follow Clifford Geertz, Joseph LaPalombara, William Delany, and others in seeing ideologies (in Delany's words) as "symbol systems that vary widely in

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such properties as dogmatism, probability of realization, rationality, integration, and rhetorical passion." Moreno writes:

> Ideas of what society is, ought to be, and ought not to be; assumptions of what motivates people, the nature of causation and its agents; appropriate explanations of complex events; ideas, codes of behavior, values, cultural themes—all these constitute an ideology through which events are made meaningful to one who experiences them.

This means that the non-intellectual "masses" can and do develop their own political perspectives and outlooks, even when there are no intellectuals around to tell them what to think. And material in *Barrios in Arms* suggests that such lower-class ideologies can be quite adequate when it comes to comprehending basic realities. Moreno was in an excellent position to explore the thinking of the inhabitants of the impoverished working-class barrios of Santo Domingo:

> It was not an easy task to detect an ideological framework in the minds of these people, since most of them were illiterate. While visiting them in their shacks, eating with them, and helping them with food, clothes, and medical attention, I tried to find out why they favored the revolution. In simple words, these people clearly stated that they supported the revolution because they had suffered too much under the Trujillo regime with its corrupt police and military, and because the rich had always had too much while the poor had had too little. By ending the abuses of the past, the revolution meant a change for the better. It promised to return Bosch to power, whom they liked because "he spoke our language and did not steal." It was for these very reasons that the military had sought an end to his regime.

Moreno perceives the function of the intellectual in essentially non-elitist terms, comparing ideology to grammar (in contrast to Bell's religious parallel) and noting: "It is the job of a trained and analytic intellectual to occupy himself with grammar, specify its rules, point out its logic, and so on. The man on the street, who may know very little about formal grammar, nevertheless speaks the language and *makes* the grammar, since popular usage determines the rules of the language. Needless to say, this grammar may differ widely from the formal grammar, just as the ideology of the masses differs from the intellectual doctrine of politics, economics, and sociology. The grammar of the masses resembles,

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but does not mirror, that of the language student." In a footnote he adds, "We could say that often both the philologist and the intellectual ideologist seek to present in a logical frame something that actually exists in the language and in the minds of people previous to and independent of the efforts of the scientist." Rather than the ideology of the masses being dependent upon the products of the intellectuals, it could be argued that the reverse is true.

At the same time, however, Moreno presents material which suggests an interaction rather than a one-way flow. Although the ideologies and activities of the various left-of-center parties were based upon the needs, wants, and aspirations of the people, it would seem that revolutionary mass action was dependent upon the ability of these parties to present a course of action which made sense to masses of people. Such interaction can be seen in the following:

> At the height of the crisis, when a decision had to be made or the causes of the revolution had to be expressed briefly and precisely, the issues tended to focus on the return to constitutionality with Bosch as president. This was often true for the leaders of the revolution, but it was true for the masses at all times. Bosch represented education, employment, and human rights. For the illiterate masses of Santo Domingo, such concepts as the constitution, freedom, human rights, education, and employment seem to mean nothing unless they are embodied in a person or leader who has actually implemented them.

In one of his most interesting contributions, Moreno notes that the bulk of the rank and file of the revolutionary civilian fighting force was made up of informal groups of friends involving from three to eight persons each (which often mixed with other, similar groups in the same barrio) who had discussed the unfolding events and reached a collective decision on whether or not to join the revolution. Asked why they had joined the rebels, members of these groups would reply to Moreno: "Well, we all decided that the rebels were right and we joined them!"

These small groups were *responding* to a proposed course of action articulated and embarked upon by more ideologically-oriented elements. Another point made by Moreno is that the persons tending to play leadership roles in those informal groups which joined the rebels generally had had stronger, more explicit ideological views and affiliations. Finally, Moreno observes that the sense of direction, organizational experience, and discipline which

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characterized those rebels who were members of formal, ideological organizations prior to the uprising resulted ultimately in greater effectiveness and durability in the work of those particular rebels. This, too, would finally have its effect upon the thinking and actions of the broader population.

This is why the small Marxist groups—the pro-Soviet Popular Socialist Party, the Maoist-oriented Popular Dominican Movement, and the *Fidelista* June 14th Movement—came to have such an important impact on the struggle, although they had been totally excluded from the original conspiracy. This is the kernel of truth in Lyndon Johnson's otherwise absurd claim that the uprising had been "seized and placed in the hands of a band of Communist conspirators."

A significant portion of the American Left has rejected the concept of a revolutionary vanguard as elitist and manipulative, maybe (or maybe not) necessary for "backward" countries, but out of place in our own land. Only raw spontaneity is acceptable. Marxists will reply that spontaneous mass action is crucial but, by itself, inadequate. The mass of people is not a monolith with a single mind. Who will propose a course of action, and on what will such a proposal be based? The vanguard is a group with a clear analysis, a general program that makes sense, and a way to communicate this to the larger population. At the decisive moment, both are necessary. Trotsky put it well: "Without a guiding organization the energy of the masses would dissipate like steam not enclosed in a piston box." All of this receives support from Moreno's empirical study.

Yet the revolutionary "piston box" in Santo Domingo failed to propel the population into a *successful* revolution. It might be argued that, in the face of U.S. military technology and the absence of rural support, the rebels were inevitably forced to compromise and capitulate. Unfortunately, Moreno seems to accept uncritically the basic decisions made by the rebel leadership, so illumination of this problem will have to be found elsewhere.

Several years before these events in the Dominican Republic, while suggesting that the dual impact of Stalinism and "the modification of capitalism, the rise of the Welfare State" had resulted in the "exhaustion" of left-wing ideology, Daniel Bell noted: "In philosophy, one can trace the decline of simplistic, rationalistic beliefs and the emergence of new stoic-theological images of man, e.g., Freud, Tillich, Jaspers, etc." Following in this vein, Reinhard Bendix has written:

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Scientific inquiry presupposes a belief in science. Most people adhere to this belief in the expectation that "knowledge is power." In the social sciences, however, confidence in this maxim has been undermined. Efforts to advance knowledge have led unwittingly to changes in conceptions of human nature. The advance of knowledge presupposes the control of bias. To control bias, we must understand its sources. In this respect, our understanding has advanced, while our distrust of reason and prudence has deepened—from Bacon's theory of idols to Nietzsche's and Freud's views of the organic conditioning of knowledge. The sciences of men have grown together with a skeptical view of human nature, and the latter raises questions about the utility of social knowledge.

One gets the feeling that this is the perspective of weary yet comfortable intellectuals who have processed stale disillusionment and despair through an academic purifier, with appropriate footnotes appended. Even if the "end of ideology" assertion is a bit premature, their reasoning suggests, such a development should be hoped for. Whatever wisdom or insights they offer are used to steer us into the "safer" channels of passive inquiry and reflection, accepting American corporate capitalism—with all of its irrationality and injustice and managerial elitism—as the best that reasonable men can hope for at present.

A rebellious East European student is alleged to have remarked: "Life is too short for one to be patient!" When radical forces throughout the world were "beginning to move again," C. Wright Mills insisted that responsible intellectuals and scholars should "help them to focus their moral upsurge in less ambiguous political ways: work out with them the ideologies, the theories, the strategies that will help them consolidate their efforts: new theories of structural changes of and by human societies in our epoch."

It is such an invigorating and liberating emotional commitment that infuses Moreno's scholarship. The results give us an understanding of political thought and action which is far more profound and informative, while less pretentious, than a dozen reflective essays on humanity's inability to use "social knowledge" for its own emancipation.

Those who make revolutions by half-measures are only digging a grave for themselves.

—St. Just

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WORLD EVENTS

By Scott Nearing

Dollars Are Down

In last month's World Events I quoted the *Wall Street Journal* (September 30, 1971) headline "Down With Dollars." The slogan was prophetic. Dollars are down, in three respects: (1) Inflation continues. In the American market the dollar buys less each month. (2) The dollar is no longer accepted as a universal reserve currency, equal to gold in planet-wide financial transactions. (3) The dollar is no longer the arbiter of world politics, as shown in the October 1971 smashing United Nations Assembly defeat on the admission of People's China and the exclusion of Washington's client state Taiwan.

Only in history's yesterday, Washington's monopoly-capitalist government stood economically, politically, militarily at the head of its class as a planet-wide super-power. During the past four months, beginning with repudiation on August 15 of the payment of gold for paper dollars held abroad, the dollar has been retreating step by step. Inflation, unemployment, production slowdown are all symptoms of the death agonies of monopoly capitalism in the United States, the big stronghold of planet-wide monopoly capitalism after war's end in 1945.

Taken by themselves, these are big events. As facts, they are only first steps in the transformation of the planet's wealth-power structure. Until 1900 there were half a dozen European powers, each with a retinue of dependencies and colonies. Each empire was a solvent, going concern with an independent money system based on gold, and interchangeable at par with the monies of their trading partners. After a general war that lasted from 1914 to 1945, there was not a single solvent capitalist empire left in Europe.

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The critical situation in 1945 led to the Marshall Plan, under which aid to the tune of billions of American dollars was poured into the sagging economies of Britain, France, and other Allied and former enemy governments. The loans provided temporary relief, but they could not and did not restore to the major European capitalist empires the prestige and authority which they enjoyed before the debacle of war-destruction, excessive borrowing, inflation, currency devaluation, and debt-repudiation of the war period.

Four undeniable facts stared the erstwhile European empires in the face. The first was the movement for independence and self-determination among African and Asian colonial peoples. The second was the spread of socialist construction across East Europe and parts of Asia. The third was the presence in Europe of large United States air, sea, and land military units. The fourth was the failure of European nations to reach anything even suggesting pan-European unity or pan-European cooperation.

Twenty-six years after war's end (1945) all four of these undeniable facts continue to testify to the downgrading of Europe, and the survival of only one undefeated, solvent, capitalist empire: the United States. Since August 15, 1971, when President Nixon announced that his government would no longer exchange European-held dollars for gold, the United States has joined its former European capitalist rivals on the mourner's bench for insolvent debtors.

This repudiation of its dollar currency has left the West leaderless and rudderless. The battered hulk of monopoly capitalism is drifting helplessly. As it drifts, production stagnates, planet-wide recession and depression threaten.

Dollars are down. Endless discussions and several sterile formal meetings of Euro-American bankers, as this script goes to press, have been unable to come up with any effective alternative to devaluation and/or repudiation.

Among West Europe's "Floating" Currencies

Throughout my entire experience I never visited Europe from a country having a "soft" currency until 1971. My first visit to Europe was in 1911, when the major currencies of the

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West were gold-based. In each currency, including the United States, an ounce of gold was priced at a specified number of pounds sterling, francs, marks, dollars. Since the currencies were all based on a specific amount of one generally acceptable commodity, all gold-based currencies were freely converted into one another. International trade balances were settled by shipping gold from one country to another.

Teaching in the United States during that pre-1914 period I was often paid in gold coin or in the "yellow-backs" issued by the U.S. Treasury against gold deposited with the Treasurer. I took this U.S. money with me to London and Paris where I exchanged it at par for British and French gold pieces of their respective currencies.

During the ensuing years I have spent long periods in Europe, carrying with me letters of credit, travelers' checks, or U.S. currency, which was generally accepted and respected. After 1945, when the U.S. dollar had become the agreed medium for international business transactions, the dollar circulated at par almost as readily as it did in the United States. There were places where it even stood at a premium. Merchants, hotels, taxi drivers accepted dollars as a matter of course. This was still true in the winter of 1970-1971.

After August 16, 1971, with the announcement of the New Economic Policy, U.S. dollars were viewed by Europeans in quite a different light. On September 1, 1971, I went to Europe, briefly, to attend an international conference. Dollars were generally accepted, but everywhere at a discount, which varied from store to store and from bank to bank.

In Amsterdam, I took an American Express travelers' check into a local bank. The banker at the exchange counter accepted the check, made a phone call, and said: "We are allowing you 3.4375 guilders per dollar." At a neighboring store they offered 3.30 guilders per dollar.

Guilders, and other currencies, were "floating." Each day, hour and minute, on the European currency exchanges, the value of currencies in terms of each other was shifting up or down. Business houses could only guess currency exchange rates for the following day or week.

Financial instability came at a critical point in West

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Europe's efforts to establish a balance of power (or terror) that would provide a minimum guarantee of peace and security.

Peace and Security in Europe

Immediately after the victory of the Allied Coalition in 1945, the establishment of the United Nations, the announcement of the Marshall Plan in 1947, and the organization of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in 1949, it was hoped that U.S. economic, political, and military predominance was a sufficient guarantee of peace and security, at least in the West.

That hope has been dissipated by U.S. wars in Korea (1950-1953) and in Southeast Asia (1965-1971), by the stubborn U.S. opposition to socialism-communism in general and People's China in particular, by the degradation of the U.S. dollar, and by the failure of U.S. leadership to come up with a positive program for the reform of the UN and the rehabilitation of monopoly capitalism.

The absence of world leadership in the West, the need for an effective check on inflation and unemployment, and the failure to reform the United Nations has turned public attention to the possibilities of world leadership from the East.

Until 1960 the Warsaw Pact countries, headed by the Soviet Union, seemed to present a workable socialist alternative to obsolete capitalist imperialism, but during the entire decade of the 1960s the two most powerful nations in the socialist bloc—the Soviet Union and China—battled each other ideologically, diplomatically, and physically. Even today they are only beginning to resume diplomatic relations. Consequently, world leadership from the East is too disrupted to seem likely.

As I write these paragraphs two documents come in the latest mail: the official publications of the Soviet Peace Committee and of the Rumanian Peace Committee. Both publications deal with peace and security in Europe.

The Soviet Peace Committee has helped to set up a Soviet Committee for European Security. Representatives of "trade unions, women's, youth, cooperative and scientific-engineering organizations, the professional unions, the Parliamentary Group of the USSR, public personalities, political figures, factory workers, scientists, collective farmers and workers in the arts, litera-

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ture and the press" met in the Moscow Central House of Trade Unions to launch the new organization. (*Bulletin of the Soviet Peace Committee,* August 1971) The official statement issued by the gathering (pp. 8-9) notes that

> the guaranteeing of European security is the most important factor for the strengthening of universal peace. . . . The nations of Europe, who lost some 50 million people in the Second World War, realize what a calamity a fresh military clash on the European continent could be today. . . . The creation of a durable system of European security in our time is quite realizable and feasible, though not a simple task.

On a later page of the same publication (p. 10) there is a note concerning a three-day meeting in the headquarters of the General Labor Federation of Belgium. Delegates from twenty countries attended the meeting. "The communiqué of the meeting contains an appeal to representatives of the political parties and public organizations of the European states which support the idea of peace and cooperation on the continent, to join actively in the noble cause of making Europe a continent of peace."

The July-September *Bulletin of the Rumanian Peace Committee* prints its lead article on "The Foreign Policy of Socialist Rumania":

> There is no principle more important for Rumania's prospects of progress . . . than national independence, the right of all peoples to decide on their destinies themselves, in keeping with their own aspirations and interests, without any outside interference. . . . The main element of the foreign policy of the Socialist Republic of Rumania is the friendship and alliance with all the socialist countries. (p. 4)

> European security requires a system of clear commitments from all states and of concrete measures which should offer each of them the full guarantee that it is safe from any danger of aggression, . . . and should ensure their peaceful development in an atmosphere of détente, confidence, and collaboration. (p. 8)

These pronouncements regarding European peace and security have one factor in common. They overlook the repeated efforts to establish peace and security in Europe based on na-

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tional sovereignty and bilateral or multilateral treaties like the Kellogg-Briand Peace Pact of 1928. Again and again they have failed to modify Europe's political structure: an aggregation on one continent of two dozen sovereign states.

In terms of political and sociological structure, peace and security in Europe is unlikely until a United States of Europe or a Federation of Europe is established with sufficient delegated powers to ensure and promote the general welfare of all Europeans. Until such a change is made in the sociopolitical structure of European culture, peace and security will continue to flit in and out of the lofty windows of romantic fancy.

World-wide Recession?

World Events, in the November 1971 MR, raised the question of planet-wide economic slow-down, pointing to a new period of general deflation like that of 1929-1938. The same question was raised in an Associated Press story from New York, published in the *Bangor Daily News* of October 20, 1971, under the heading "Recession World-wide." "From West Germany to Tokyo jobless rolls are growing, national production is off, and stock markets are falling. The recession is even reaching into underdeveloped countries whose raw materials exports are bringing in less cash." The article, unusually long for an AP dispatch, cites chapter and verse to support the generalizations in its first two paragraphs.

Forty-three years ago President Coolidge announced that the United States had reached a level of permanent prosperity. In the next year, 1929, planetary deflation ended the boom launched by the war of 1914-1918. President Nixon's New Economic Policy, with the resulting "dollar crisis," may mark the end of the long inflation that accompanied the wars of 1936-1971.

One socialist country, the Soviet Union, existed in 1929. Its planned economy was practically unscathed by the 1929-1938 liquidation. Will the fourteen socialist economies of 1971 prove equally immune to the antics of the capitalist business cycle?

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(*Continued from inside front cover*)

employed and discussing the reliability of such data as well as the validity of the economic categories to which they refer; (3) presenting analyses of the present stage of development of Italian and European capitalism and elements toward a class analysis of present Italian society." We are enthusiastic about this project and will follow it with close attention.

We acknowledge with gratitude receipt of a generous contribution to MR in memory of the late Ernest Munster, who during his lifetime was a faithful and valued friend of the magazine and its editors.

When subscriptions expire, renewal notices are routinely sent out, culminating in a "Final Notice." Correspondence suggests that some recipients of this final notice fail to note that it explicitly states that it should be ignored if in the meantime they have renewed. Such crossing of final notices and renewals occurs quite frequently and should not be a source of consternation or annoyance. It can always be avoided by early renewal!

Another mechanical problem concerns correspondence about subscriptions, and especially changes of addresses. All such correspondence should include zip codes of both old and new addresses. Because of post office regulations, the mailing list has to be maintained according to zip codes, which explains the importance of this information.

An economics major at a mid-western university writes: "I just talked with an economist who recently came back from Brazil. He spoke glowingly of the fantastic growth rate (10 percent) of the economy along capitalist lines. Because of my lack of knowledge of Brazil, I was at a loss in defending my views. And since I haven't been able to find any good information on Brazil, perhaps you can help. Can you tell me where to get some good, timely information on Brazil?" It so happens that we have received two excellent manuscripts on Brazil which should go far toward answering the question posed by our correspondent, a question which is no doubt in the minds of other readers as well. One of the manuscripts is by Eduardo Galeano, the Uruguayan journalist, author of MR Press book *Guatemala, Occupied Country* and of numerous articles in MR. The other is by Ruy Mauro Marini, a Brazilian social scientist now living in Chile. Both are being translated and are scheduled to appear in the January issue.

Owing to an error, for which we and not the author were responsible, a seriously misleading statement was included in the footnote on page 29 of Ruth Glass's "Bengal Notes" in the October issue. The per capita cost of minimum subsistence for an East Bengali refugee is given in the footnote as "just over six cents (½ a rupee) per day." This should read "1½ rupees (about 20 cents) per day." The total cost of maintaining refugees is correspondingly understated. It should read: "For seven million refugees it amounts to almost one and a half million dollars daily, and to almost five hundred million dollars for one year." By now, it should be added, the total number of refugees and hence the total cost of maintaining them has increased still further.

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